AN

APOLOGY

FOR THE

Letter from SCOTLAND

AGAINST THE

Sacramental Teſt.

SIR,

I Thank you for your kind Information; and tho' it be objected that the Letter is too Long, and writ with too much Warmth, yet I think it eaſy enough to account for Both. As to the Firſt, it was difficult to contract into a leſſer Compaſs than a Six-penny Pamphlet, a juſt Repreſentation both of the Riſe and the malignant Influence ſuch a Law has upon the Common Good of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*: That ſo I hope it will be excus'd, if the Scene of Miſchief this Law opens was diſcover'd in the fulleſt View. As to the Latter, I was inſpired but with as much Warmth as would riſe to expreſs a real Concern for the Intereſt of Religion and my Country.

I intended no Railery againſt the *Church*, but againſt thoſe Principles that had almoſt ruin'd the *Church* and our Common Liberty; and whatever looſer Principles or Immorality I charg'd on the Clergy of *England*, I wiſh there was no Foundation for it: Yet if I miſtook in my Calculation, I humbly beg Pardon. However, I can't forbear expreſſing the Satisfaction I ſhould have, if every Pariſh was fill'd up with as much Piety, Learning and Moderation, as the Epiſcopal *See's* are.

Notwithſtanding I am thus free to own my Faults, yet I can't recede from the Arguments I offered againſt the *Sacramental Teſt*; for I can't ap-

prehend how it can be continued, without a Diſhonour to Religion, Injuſtice to our Conſtitution and Liberty, and the Union of the Two Kingdoms.

It is evident, the Diſſenters in *England* are united in their Civil Principles, (which have been repreſented in the Letter) and are ſuch immovable Friends to the Civil Conſtitution of *England*, as that they would ſcruple no Hazard to maintain all the Parts of it. Tho', in the Preface to the Lord *Clarendon*'s Hiſtory, they have been charg'd with training up their Youth in *Antimonarchical Principles*; which, if I had not known to be falſe, yet their diſtinguiſhed Loyalty to the Queen, and Forwardneſs to ſerve the Government, upon all Occaſions; their Zeal againſt the Common Enemy, and their Abhorrence of thoſe Principles which would quite overwhelm our moſt valuable Bleſſings, are a viſible Confutation. Tho' this has been all along an artificial Inſinuation of thoſe, who are the great Adorers of Abſolute Monarchy, to make them Odious; as if all Diſſenters were under the influence of Republican Principles: But how true this is, may be ſeen in the Letter, from the profeſſed Principles and Conduct of Diſſenters; which is ſuch a Demonſtration of their Integrity to the Conſtitution, and preſent Settlement, as can't be deny'd.

It is, certainly, a real Diſſervice to incapacitate them; and an Endangering our Liberty, by ſuffering our Conſtitution, which ſecures it, to lie too expos'd to ſuch Enemies, as would be glad to ſee ſuch Principles take place, as would entirely Subvert it. It was not Diſſenters who petition'd againſt the Sitting of *Parliaments*, as was done in King *Charles* II.'s Reign; nor ever made Addreſſes of Thanks to King *James*, for ſeizing the Cuſtoms without Law; neither can they ever be charg'd with ſuch Arbitrary Practices, as would in conſequence, be deſtructive of Parliaments.

This was one great Reaſon, why the Diſſenters fell under ſuch baſe Miſrepreſentations, as if they were Enemies to Monarchy; when they were only Enemies to ſuch Principles, as would have introduc'd ſuch an Arbitrary Rule, as would have enſlav'd us. This was ſo apparent a Deſign in the late Reigns, as might be eaſily demonſtrated; and was the ſecret Spring of all the Hardſhips they underwent. It was not their Diſſent from the Church of *England*, there being no farther a Regard even to That, as appear'd afterwards, than to make uſe of the Generality of the Clergy, upon a ſpecious Pretence of a Concern for their Conſtitution, as Tools, to vent thoſe Notions as would ſubſerve the Arbitrary Deſigns of the Court: By which Method, they are ſuch rooted Tenets in many, as they are become Conſcientious in the maintaining of them, tho' they are deſtructive of the very End of Civil Government, and dangerous to our Publick Welfare.

Why must then dividing Maxims take place, which were hatch'd in an Arbitrary Reign, upon no other View than our Common Destruction? The Clergy of *England* then too generally fell in with them, in hopes of gaining an Absolute Jurisdiction in the Church, and independent on the Civil Government; and because the Dissenters join'd with the Moderate Church, in opposing these Despotick Maxims, they became the Objects of Publick *Odium*: But when they had tasted the ill Effects of those enslaving Opinions, it reconcil'd them to the Principles of Dissenters, for their own Safety: And if, as Mr. *Johnson* says, these prov'd to be *Deliverance-Truths*, they are no less a Security against future Encroachments. So that, it can never be the Interest of the Government to support any Engine of Division, as would weaken its Security; unless it be for such a Reason, as will be sufficient to balance with our Common Safety.

But, is Kneeling at the Sacrament of such Weight, which we have no warrant to think God has any regard to, more than Sitting or Standing? And whatever is alledg'd upon the account of Reverence and Decency, is a Charge of the contrary upon the Practice of Christ and his Apostles, who Sat. Besides, it must be suppos'd, from the Tenour of this Act, That a Person can't be Sincere to the Government, Loyal to the Queen, Zealous for the Protestant Succession, without such a Compliance with the Use of the *Church of England*, which is easy to evince has been no Test of Loyalty, by the many Enemies who have crept into Places of Trust, under the Shelter of it. But, Have the Dissenters been such Enemies? Dissenting Loyalty has been as distinguishing as Church-Loyalty; and while the Dissenters are inviolable in their Affection to the Government, it is impolitick to lay any stress upon this. But suppose Kneeling at the Sacrament was any Security to the Church and State; *Occasional Conformity*, which is a prevailing Opinion amongst Dissenters, has much weaken'd it; and yet there has been no Attempt to subvert either; no, nor so much as a Thought of it; so that there is the less Fear of repealing this Law, as far as it affects Dissenters.

And it is evident, it is not much Security against the Papists, who have a Dispensation to comply with all that this Law requires; that it looks like a needless cause of Division, as if we were willing to gratify our Enemies, by supporting their Hopes of having an Opportunity to execute their evil Intentions upon us.

Therefore it must be suppos'd, That either it is by the secret invisible Influence of Popish Counsels, these Causes of Division are maintain'd; or else, by such as harbour an inveterate Enmity to the Constitution, and so are resolved, as long as possible, (as was manifest by the *Occasional Bill*) to keep the Dissenters at a Distance, whose utmost Endeavours are exerted to Support it.

The happy Effects of the Toleration are such invincible Proofs of the Desirableness of Union, as one would think, this single Consideration should be of Weight sufficient to remove every Thing that might obstruct it. If *Dissenters* had been any otherwise than Friends to the Constitution, the *Parliament* must have thought them as undeserving, and as uncapable of Toleration, as the *Papists*. But their Conduct ever since the Revolution has been without Suspicion, and has sufficiently justify'd the Government's Opinion of them. And why should not they be admitted into Places of Trust, as well as Tolerated, since their Zeal for the present Settlement has been so remarkable, that it would be improbable to imagin any part of the Administration unsafe in their Hands, whose Concern for the Constitution has been unexceptionable, with all the Disadvantages they have labour'd under.

When ever the Nation was in Danger by Arbitrary Measures, they were in Confederacy with those that oppos'd them. And Matters have been brought to that Crisis, That if nothing but War could have rescu'd us, the Nation would never have scrupled the throwing down such a Wall of Partition to have secur'd their Assistance. And I am satisfy'd I speak the general Sense of all the Dissenters of *England*, that they are willing to run any Risque for the Constitution and present Government, which they judge to be the stated Measure of the Interest of the Kingdom. It was therefore their great Concern upon the late Invasion [illegible], that they wanted a *larger Capacity* for her *Majesty*'s Service, as they express'd it in their *Address* upon that Occasion.

What a Discouragement must this be to Men of Loyalty? To fall under such Misrepresentations as such a Law must suggest, to the prejudic'd and unthinking part of the Kingdom, as if they were Enemies while they are Ambitious to approve themselves Friends, equal with any, to the Liberty of *England*. It's no harm to clear themselves of all Suspicion, and wipe off such Aspersions, as if they were engag'd in an Interest separate from that of the Kingdom's, by desiring such a Capacity, whereby they might give the highest Proofs of their Zeal for the Nations Service.

Further, can the Government spread its Foundation wide enough? Can it be any Prejudice to encourage those who are forward to support it? Tho' they differ in some things from the Establish'd Church, yet why should the Civil Government interest itself in their private Opinions to a Publick Prejudice? Especially when they are neither Dangerous nor Destructive of the Government, nor of the Church, which they stood by in the Time of their greatest Danger. This is contrary to all the Rules of Policy, and the Wisdom of the greatest Statesmen, which is exemplify'd in the Conduct of *Oliver*, however obnoxious he is upon the Account of his Usurpation; yet certainly he was so far Master of the Art of Government, as never to regard the private Opinions of persons,

ſons, provided they were faithful to his Service. This is farther illuſtrated in the Character *Livy* gives of *Hannibal*; That tho' he led an Army, compounded of ſeveral Nations, which differ'd in Religion, Laws, Condition, and Language; yet he held them in ſuch Order, that they never fell into Sedition among themſelves, or againſt their General. But, certainly, had *Hannibal* join'd with any one Faction amongſt them, to have introduc'd a *Teſt-Act*, or an *Occaſional Bill*, to have reduc'd their Opinion to one common Standard, he would have ſoon ſpoil'd the Harmony of his Conduct, and thrown all into Confuſion. But no Reaſon or Example will prevail againſt Biggotry, which is a poor, narrow, ſelfiſh Principle; which cannot afford to make an Allowance for the Weakneſs of Mens Apprehenſions, and the different Prejudices they have imbib'd by Education.

If this which has been ſaid is of no force, it may be alleg'd further, That this Law is inconſiſtent with the Preſervation of the Union with *Scotland*, and what the *Scots* are uneaſie under the Continuance of. I have more fully repreſented the Sufferings they fell under by Epiſcopal Tyranny in the Letter, which were ſo ſevere, as if Men by pretending to Religion had thrown off all the Marks of Humanity. The Principles which led to Perſecution, were more becoming Savages than Men; and it's certainly the higheſt Abuſe of Religion, and a moſt extravagant Perverſion of it to eſtabliſh it by ſuch Methods as derive no Authority from *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*. The Senſe of their former Sufferings ſway'd many to Oppoſe the Union, who were otherwiſe well affected to the Preſent Government and Proteſtant Succeſſion, as judging it unſafe to the Preſent Conſtitution of the Kirk of *Scotland*, and of laying a Foundation to bring them under the Load of Epiſcopal Tyranny; ſo allowing them to be Men acted by the ſame Principles of Preſervation with the reſt of Mankind, they can't be ſo ſtupid as to be unconcern'd about their future Security.

The Church of *England* has not the ſame Reaſon upon this Account to be uneaſie, having all the Security that can be deſir'd; for beſides their Confirmation on the foot of the Articles of Union, they have their *Biſhops* to Sit in *Parliament* as Guardians of their Eſtabliſhment, who alone have above a Third as much in the *Legiſlature* as our *Lords* and *Commons* together: Beſides, above three Perſons in four in the two Houſes of Parliament are for the Eſtabliſh'd Church; and the Prince, according to the ſeveral Regulations of the *Act* of *Settlement*, is oblig'd to be a Member of the Church of *England*. Nay, further, the very Genius of the Nation is diſpos'd upon any Attempt to defend it, that it is morally impoſſible that the Church (according to the Cant which was ſpread ſo induſtriouſly all the Nation over by ſome ill deſigning Men) ſhould be in Danger. It's true, our Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution is ſecured by the Laws of *Scotland* and the Articles of Union;

but

but what Majority have we to plead our Defence againſt any Attempt that may be made upon it; ſo that it is plain enough we lie at the Mercy of the Power and Intereſt of the Church of *England*, and we are but in a low Condition to make any Reſiſtance when ever they are pleas'd to exert themſelves for our Subverſion.

It's true, it would be an unaccountable Jealouſie to ſuſpect the Queen, whoſe Promiſes have been added to the Reſt of our Securities for the *Presbyterian Government* and our Civil Liberty. Neither have we Reaſon to ſuſpect the preſent *Biſhops*, whoſe concurring Votes we had in Parliament for our Preſervation. Beſides, they are adorn'd with ſo much Piety, and acted from ſuch Principles of Moderation, as conduce much to our Eaſe and Satisfaction. But yet it is not unknown to us that a great part of the Clergy of *England* are under the Influence of quite different Principles, and theſe are ſo prevailing, that we have Reaſon to be jealous, eſpecially when they are avowed Enemies to our Conſtitution, and by their Principles Unchurch us, deny the Validity of our Ordinations, have pleaded for Perſecution, an Inſtance of which we have ſeen by their Zeal for the *Occaſional Bill*, and the Efforts they made throughout all *England* for chuſing ſuch as had diſtinguiſh'd 'emſelves by Voting for the Tack, which *dangerous Experiment*, had it ſucceeded, would have had an Influence upon the common Liberty of *Europe*. What can we expect? When to obtain their own extravagant Purpoſes they venture at all Hazards, tho' the Conſequence might be the giving up the Laws and Liberties of their own Country to a French Power; ſo that if the keeping the Union entire be a thing in view, it would ſink our Diſcouragements by guarding againſt all the Encroachments we fear.

But there is a Plea remaining from the Rules of Equity and Juſtice, that we ſhould be let into all the Civil Privileges of *England*, without any Impoſition upon the Conſcience, eſpecially now all our great Offices of State are ſunk by the Union, as well as the *Engliſh* may enter upon any Civil Poſt in *Scotland*, without any Neceſſity to comply with the Uſage of the Church of *Scotland*. All Union ſhould give a Reciprocation of Rights, otherwiſe it is imperfect, and the *Scots* muſt look upon themſelves ſuſpected by the Continuance of ſuch an Incapacity, as create Fears of further Hardſhips, make them look on their Reſerved Rights and Privileges as precarious, and it will keep a continual Uneaſineſs upon their Minds thro' a dread of overturning ſuch an Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution as is ſuited to maintain the Civil Liberty of our Country.

Again, Is there not a hazard of all? Is it no Addition to the better Security of the Proteſtant Religion, and Civil Liberty, as well as the Union? A Union of Affection would be the beſt Cement. But while Occaſions of Jealouſy are maintain'd, it will ſpread about different Apprehenſions, and keep alive the Seeds of Diſcontent, create a perpetual

Miſun-

Misunderstanding, which is the Design our Enemies aim at. The Efforts our Enemies have made against our Peace, the Mischief and Confusion we have been thrown into, should at least, have inspir'd us with so much Wisdom, as to stand upon our Guard; that, if possible, we might give an entire Defeat to the very Hopes of our Enemies. The Encroachments of barefac'd *Popery* have fix'd the Nation in rooted Prejudices against it; and why should not those Principles, which were calculated to introduce it, be as much abhor'd. Arbitrary Measures were but a Preface to it. Divine Right of Power and Succession, were invented Notions to serve a Turn; and to amuse Princes with such Pretences to Power, as the Law of God and Man never gave them; that so they might, under the Shadow of Absolute Jurisdiction, confirm their own Establishment. This Artifice has rais'd up so much Enmity to our Constitution, the Union of Protestants, the Peace and Liberty of the Kingdom. This has divided the Church of *England* amongst themselves, and inflam'd the Heats and Animosities against Dissenters. This has planted a Prejudice between *England* and *Scotland*. We may see by Experience the Popish Principles are catching, they have Proselyted many Protestants, infused into them the Spirit of Persecution, and charm'd them with a Desire of a Despotick Power in the Church, insomuch that the Queens Spiritual Authority is call'd in Question. While these Bastard Notions are Propagated as Authentick, there are no hopes of Safety if ever these sort of Men get into Power. If their former Practices are a Copy of what they intend, the Liberty of *Great-Britain*, the Union, Presbyterian Government, must give way to Tyranny, Oppression and Persecution; these Considerations speak with such an Importunity for such a Security, as would make us all easie.

I can't forbear dropping a Reflection on the Condition of poor *Ireland*, the Protestant Dissenters there have been invincible Opposers of Popery, and yet the Bishop of *Rapho* and his Clergy would intimate in their late Address (which had nothing to recommend it but the Grace with which it was receiv'd) as if they were for Repealing those Laws that are Guards against Popery; this is either an ignorant or malicious Suggestion. There have been so many Overt Acts of their Firmness to the Protestant Interest, that a bare Denial would be sufficient. However, we may go to *Londonderry* and *Iniskilling* for Evidence. This Insinuation ought to be kickt with the utmost Resentment. The Protestants there fell under the Power of Popish Persecution without distinction; and must nothing but their bloody Executions Unite them in their Opposition. Tho' the *Papists* could not sink the Bill by their utmost Endeavours, yet they almost answer'd their Ends by dividing them, hoping the next opportunity to cut their Throats of one part of them without Opposition, which the Invasion of the *Pretender* had almost given them. But I hope the Dissenting Protestants understand that the Laws of Self Defence supersede all Laws that oblige to the contrary. The general

Sense

Senſe of Epiſcopal Proteſtants is againſt this Law, as an undeſerved Oppreſſion upon thoſe who more eſpecially had ſo ſignaliz'd themſelves for the Proteſtant Cauſe; yet it is too manifeſt by the late Treatment of Mr. *Bigger*, a Diſſenting Miniſter at *Drogheda*, who was thrown into Priſon for Preaching, That the Perſecuting Fire of the Papiſts had infected ſome of the Epiſcopal Party. This is the effect of the want of a Legal Toleration, which has given Occaſion to ſome who make a great Figure in the Church, to threaten them with the loſs of the Liberty they enjoy, were it not Reſpect to the Government of *England*. But I hope a Senſe of their Deſerts, and of their memorable Conduct will ſo far prevail, as to prevent thoſe Inclinations that are a Scandal to the Proteſtant Cauſe.

I ſhall conclude with one word from the Head of Religion which this Law ſo much oppoſes, as to render all Diſcipline ineffectual to anſwer the Ends and Purpoſes of it; for as I ſaid at large in the Letter, it has no Regard either to the End of the Inſtitution or to the Fitneſs the Scriptures require, whereby the vileſt of Men are admitted. I ſhall give you a ſingle Inſtance of one *K*—, an Officer in the Queen's Yard at *Deptford*, who, for his exceſſive Swearing, was Reprov'd by a Roman Catholick, and deſired for Jeſus Chriſt's Sake not to Swear ſo. For Jeſus Sake, ſays the Man, why, what's he any more than any other Baſtard. I ſhould have been aſham'd to blot Paper with ſuch Blaſphemy, but only to illuſtrate the Incapacity of many to Receive the Body and Blood of Chriſt; and that which is more an Aggravation of the Sin of this Law, is, becauſe a Miniſter runs the Hazard of being ruin'd by refuſing it to ſuch a Blaſphemer.

I ſhall tire your Patience no further, but only with a Requeſt to accept of the Service of,

SIR,

December 16. 1708. *Yours*, C. H.

Adverti ſement.

A Letter from a Gentleman in *Scotland* to his Friend in *England*, againſt the *Sacramental Teſt*; as Inconſiſtent with the Union, Dangerous to the Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution of *North-Britain*, and to ſuch parts of their Civil Conſtitution as are reſerv'd to them; Inconſiſtent with the Civil Intereſt of *Great-Britain* in general; contrary to the Deſign of our Saviour's Inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, and to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, The Second Edition Corrected. Sold by *B. Bragg* at the *Raven* in *Pater-noſter-Row*, and the Booksellers of *London* and *Weſtminſter*. 1708. Price Sixpence.

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